

IRTS Radio News Bulletin Sunday 9th November 2008

Visit by VU2GMN

Gopal Madhavan VU2GMN is in Ireland at present on a visit to his Irish relations, which include Prakash EI4HY. Gopal, who is President of the Amateur Radio Society of India and also a Director of IARU Region 3, joined IRTS committee members after their recent committee meeting in Portlaoise. Gopal outlined the issues facing amateur radio operators in India. The country has a relatively small amateur radio community for its size, however the significance of amateur radio was brought to the fore in India in December 2004 when an amateur radio DXpedition on the Andaman and Nicobar islands became the only link to the mainland for a period, after a nearby earthquake followed by tidal waves destroyed all other forms of communication.

Staying with the theme of disaster relief, Gopal has worked with the United Nations Development Programme and local government in India in setting up an Early Warning System, to include amateur radio, both digital and voice, as one of the communication links.

Theory Examination

Nine candidates sat the Theory Examination for the Experimenter's Licence on Thursday week last. The papers were corrected and were delivered back to ComReg on Tuesday. We hope that the results will be issued sometime in the coming week. The next Theory Examination will be held in June /July 2009.

Morse Code tests at Mayo Rally

There will be Morse Code tests available at the upcoming Mayo Rally on the 23rd of November. These tests must be booked in advance by contacting: Sean Donelan EI4GK telephone 01 2821420.

Historic QSO

On 14th November, the next launch of the space shuttle Endeavour is scheduled to

take place. This is almost 25 years to the day after a famous QSO took place between the IRTS headquarters station and Owen Garriot(W5LFL) aboard the space shuttle Columbia. This was the first amateur radio operation from space. Mike Staunton (EI3DY) was at the microphone at EI0RTS when contact was made on two-metres. The station was set up especially for the occasion at the RTE museum, then located in Rathmines. Unfortunately, the Columbia disintegrated on re-entry to earth's atmosphere in February 2003 killing all seven aboard.

Two events took place recently which brought to mind that famous QSO in 1983. Owen Garriot's son Richard was recently a fare-paying space tourist when he spent 12 days aboard the International Space Station. However, on 25th October members of SDR, including Mike (EI3DY) paid a visit to EI0MAR at the vintage radio museum in Howth which has a recording of that famous EI0RTS QSO with the Shuttle from 1983. Tony, EI5EM played the recording to the gathering, following which, Mike received a spontaneous round of applause.

Tony hopes to have that recording on youtube by the time this news is broadcast. Key search words will be ei0rts, ei3dy, irts and columbia. The museum in Howth has now reverted to winter opening hours 11-4 on Saturdays and Sundays. If any groups or clubs would like to visit the museum they can email tony@ei0mar.org or through the museum's web page www.ei0mar.org

Shuttle Launch STS-126

The next shuttle launch is scheduled for the 14th of November, This mission will have four amateur radio operators onboard. It will be Piloted by Eric Boe and Mission Specialist Donald Pettit, KD5MDT, Steve Bowen, Heidemarie Stefanyshyn-Piper, KD5TVR, Shane Kimbrough, KE5HOD and Sandra Magnus, KE5FYD. Magnus will replace space station crew member Greg Chamitoff, KD5PKZ, who has been aboard the station for more than five months.

Cross band Repeater on board THE I.S.S.

Astronaut Mike Fincke, KE5AIT has turned on the cross band repeater on board the International Space Station and early reports indicate that its coverage is quite good to those within its ever shifting radio range.

The world-wide frequencies are 437.80 MHz as your uplink while you listen on 145.80 MHz as the downlink or output channel. Operation is similar to working the Amsat Oscar 51 satellite or any ground-based cross band system. The big difference is that in this case you literally talk through the repeater on board the I-S-S to other hams

within range of the I-S-S radio footprint on the ground.

How long the cross band repeater will remain in operation is not known. 145.8 MHz is also used for normal QSO's and school contacts, you can expect it to be off during those times. Also, the cross band repeater uses the cross band repeat function of the on-board Kenwood D 700 radio. This unit is also used for other on-orbit ham radio operations and during those periods the repeater will likely be off line.

Chinese Amateur Radio Satellite Update

The XW-1 will be launched into a Sun synchronous orbit to an altitude: 499 kilometres with an inclination of 98 degrees and an orbital period of 94 minutes. It will be powered by a 16 amp hour Lithium Ion battery that will recharge off solar cells that will be a part of the spacecraft.

XW-1's ham radio payload will consist of a Morse beacon operating at 435 MHz plus a linear transponder for 2 meter and 70 centimetre operations and an FM repeater operating cross band from 2 meters also up to 70 centimetres. A digital store and forward transponder on these same bands round out the gear which Chen says will way in at 5 point 2 kilograms. That come out to be about 11 pounds.

South Dublin Radio Club's new QTH

The South Dublin Radio Club QTH in Rathfarnham is being refurbished at present, so the club has moved temporarily to a new premises. Members held their first meeting at the new QTH, the Scout Hall, Templeogue Lodge, on Tuesday 4th November.

A number of talks and other activities are planned for the next few months, the first of these being a talk on Astronomy. More details will be announced in due course. The club meets every Tuesday from 8.00 pm to 10.00 pm. Directions to the new QTH are on the club's web site www.southdublinradioclub.ie New members and visitors are always welcome.

Limerick Radio Club Meeting

The next meeting of Limerick Radio Club will be held on Thursday 13th November 2008 at the Limerick Institute of Technology, Moylish, Limerick.

Alan Cronin EI8EM will give a talk on HF DX-ing. The meeting will commence at

19:30. All are welcome to attend.

Shannon Basin Radio Club

The Shannon Basin Radio Club Sprint Challenge will be held on Sunday 30th November between 14:00 and 18:00. Please see www.shannonbasinradioclub.com for contest rules. Logs to be forwarded to Brian EI8IU at qthr or to brianei8iu@eircom.net

Rallies

Sunday 23rd November: Mayo Radio Rally, Belmont Hotel, Knock, Co. Mayo. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. Rally Director, Padraig Baynes, EI9JA info www.ei7mre.org

DX Bulletins

The Vendee Globe Challenge 1-15 November

Members of the Radio Club Vendean will be active as TM6VG between November 1-15th.

Activity is to celebrate the 6th sailing race called 'The Vendee Globe Challenge' towards and around the three great capes, marking the southern tips of the African continent, Australia and America.

Activity will be on the HF bands, 160-10 meters, included 30/17/12 meter bands, and VHF 2 meters. Modes will be CW, SSB and various digital modes. QSL via F6KU

DXCC End of year approaching

In order to appear in the printed 'Annual and Honor Roll' listings your submission must be postmarked on or by Wednesday, December 31, 2008.

The DXCC Honor Roll list is scheduled for publication in August 2009 QST. For the 2008 calendar year the minimum requirement to appear in the Honour Roll list is 329 current entities. The Top of the Honour Roll total is 338 for this period. Remember, deleted entities do not count towards the Honour Roll.

Direct comments or questions to dxcc@arrl.org

Items for inclusion in next weeks Radio News should be forwarded to Charlie EI8JB, via e-mail to "charlie dot Carolan at gmail dot com. Or by phone to 087-6265418

News can also be submitted via e-mail to "newsteam at irts dot ie" for automatic forwarding to both the radio and printed news services. Please note that items for the radio news should reach the editor no later than midday on Friday in order to be guaranteed inclusion in the following Sunday's bulletin.

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